



ISLAM

# africa

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JULY-AUG.-SEPT., 1961





*In the name of God the Clement and the Merciful*

**"... In order to love each other, we must know each other.  
To know each other,  
Each must go to meet the other."**

CARDINAL MERCIER

# ISLAM AND US

"BETWEEN ISLAM AND US there lies a gulf . . ." A gulf that discussions, inquisitions, mutual distrust and well-intentioned blunders have deepened and widened through the centuries.

Have Christians . . . possessing a truth which should, they think, be as evident to others as it is to them . . . not too easily dismissed without investigation what they consider a tissue of ignorance or error? Have they made a real effort to get to know, to understand, to discover and appreciate the qualities of the Moslem: the sincerity of his convictions, his deep faith in a transcendent God, his spirit of prayer, his religious sense of hospitality . . . "Do you believe in Islam?" someone asked Mr. Masignon, celebrated French professor of El-hzar University in Cairo, Egypt—"I believe in the true, immanent, personal God of Abraham," he replied, "and that is the first link between my Moslem friends and me. Let us approach the Moslem as our brother in

Abraham, born, not of the same blood, but of the same spirit of faith and sacrifice."

This attitude of mind does not prevent Christians from asserting the insufficiency of Islam which does not recognize Christ—He "in whom," as St. Paul says, "is all the fullness of the Godhead." But, leaving aside useless arguments, such a point of view will lead us to approach "our separated brethren with our humble love," in the words of Father Lyonnet. And through our love, more than by our apologetics, the sons of Islam will experience something of the friendship of Christ.

"Between Islam and us there lies a gulf," wrote Father Voillaume, founder and Superior General of the Little Brothers of Charles de Foucauld. "and it is every Christian's duty to help bridge it by the testimony of Christlike charity . . . sincere, entire, and disinterested."

*Sister Jacques de Compostelle, W. S.*

*africa*

1961

JULY- AUG.- SEPT.

Sr. Jacques deC

Editor

Charles R. Hawk

Lay-out, Art

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# ISLAM

a religion



A Mosque in the Holy City of Kairouan, Tunisia

Five prayer times are fixed by the Moslem ritual. At dawn, mid-day, afternoon, sunset and night-fall, the "Muezzin", (guardian of the Mosque), climbs up to the minaret or tower of the Mosque, and crying from all four sides, he calls the faithful to prayer: "[I] attest that there is only one God and Mohammed is his prophet . . ."

a community



GHARDAIA — At the foot of the great Mosque the houses huddle together, forming a solid block, compact and indivisible — image of the immense Moslem community within its walls.

(Photo C. A. P.)

a civilization



A Moroccan stone sculptor

Because the painting or sculpturing of images is forbidden by the Koran, the art of intricate design has been highly developed by the Moslems.

(Photo Tourist Office, Morocco)









الْمَلِكُ لِلَّهِ الْمَلِكُ

("all dominion be to GOD OUR KING")



MARKET DAY IN THE SAHARIAN TOWN OF GHARDAIA.  
Even when the faith diminishes or disappears as sometimes happens in the more developed classes, the community sentiment remains intact.

(photo Blondeau)

***The grandeur of Islam lies in its fierce monotheism. But it is not only a religion —it is also a community, and a civilization. Islam considers itself at once a religion and an earthly city. (Its vocation is to establish the Kingdom of God on earth). It does not admit of any distinction between the spiritual and the temporal.***

***This union of the spiritual and temporal dates from the origins of Islam and all its institutions are based on this assumption. Present-day Moslem political reformers find it a check to their efforts to establish modern states.***

THE KORAN itself, which is considered the word of God, is the constitution of the earthly city; in theory, at least, it is the only law conceivable, and Moslem legislators must settle all problems by its rules. Caesar is successor to the Prophet: he must rule the people of Allah, keeping strictly to the law of the Book. In this sense, all Moslem States are theocratic; everything belongs to God and depends directly on him; everything is sacred . . . the profane does not exist.

It is because of this particular view-point that Moslems often seem susceptible, seeing an insult in what, to our Western eyes, seems to concern the temporal and profane (for example, the emancipation of women in Algeria today). Where we talk politics the Moslem is talking religion: he does not possess the lay spirit. Even reforms as radical as that of Ataturk, which has completely laicized modern Turkey, is placed in an Islamic context, and this is even truer of the more or less timid attempts at laicization made by Nasser, Bourguiba, or the Moroccan government.

A true Moslem is only such when he lives in a Moslem state governed by Moslem laws. (In 1948 during the war against Israel, the Egyptian press declared: "Auriol, Churchill, and Truman order a new crusade against Islam." I think the idea of a crusade was far from Vincent Auriol!)

A typical example of the same mentality is given us by Colonel Nasser himself in his book-program, "The philosophy of the Revolution." He wishes to change the meaning given up until now to the pilgrimage to Mecca. "The visit to the Kaaba," he says, "must not be an entry ticket into Paradise, nor an ingenuous attempt to buy the Divine pardon. The pilgrimage could be an enormous political force. The world press should take an interest in it, not from the point of view of rites and traditions but as a political congress, each year reuniting the leaders of the Islamic States, the Ulemas (doctors of the law) writers, merchants, the kings of industry, etc., in

order to study the main lines of a policy common to all Moslem nations."

Imagine the opposition if a President of the United States were to write the same of a pilgrimage to Rome!

For the Moslem, the world is divided into two parts, of which only one has a right to exist: that is "dar al Islam," the house of Islam. "Legal war," wrote Father Jomier, from Cairo, in his excellent *Koranic Commentary on the Mansar*, "is governed by two fundamental principles. In the first place, the Moslem community, oppressed in its secular or religious life, has the right to resort to force in order to ward off oppression, return to the place from which it had been chased, and recuperate its goods" (that is to say, all that God had delivered into its hands during the eighth century conquests). "In the second place, she may demand, if need be with arms, the liberty to preach the Moslem faith . . . , and to carry out its laws."

In order to understand the reactions of Arab countries at the United Nations Assemblies, a comprehension of the Moslem point of view would certainly be of greater help than the comments of a press that thinks itself well informed. In contract matters, as Paul Buttin points out, the Moslem is as dependable as any Westerner, but with this one restriction: every act which disposes of anything belonging to the Moslem community — "dar al Islam" — is null and void. Islamic solidarity is inalterable destiny; it will not suffer subjection to a non-Moslem power. Therefore, every treaty, every pact which creates such a subjection (I do not say "association") is doomed to nullity by the very fact.

None of our answers, whether to political or economic problems, are valid for the Moslems. They see things from a different point of view. We often place ourselves on the plane of social or international justice. They place themselves on the religious plane. They judge according to Koranic principles. Their



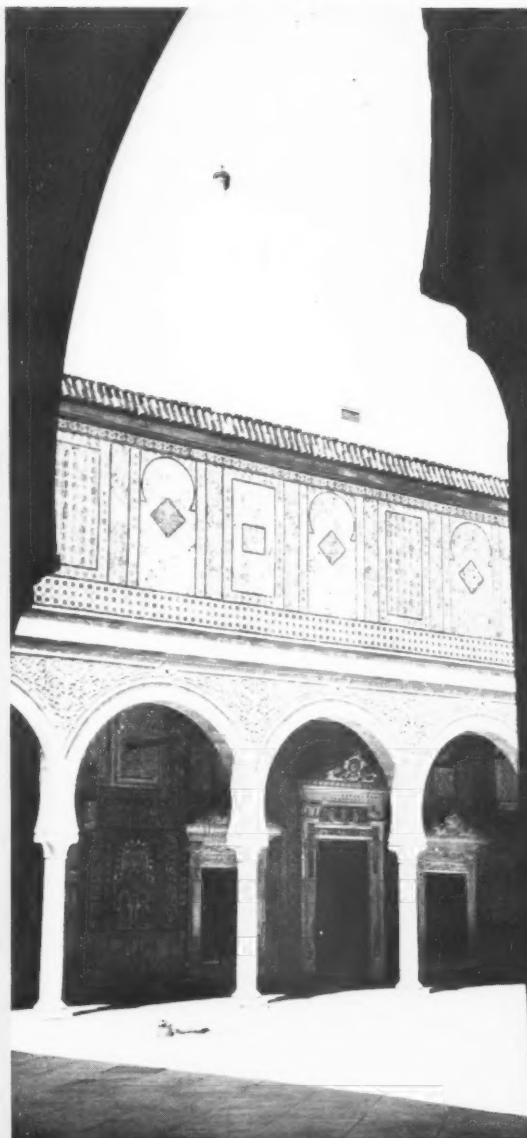
political claims are born of their faith; in Islam it is all one. And if the Moslems march with the times, the same cannot be said of Islam itself. Islam is a community. Where there is a community there is unity. The soul of the Moslem community is the unique faith in the unique and absolutely transcendent God. From the one profession of faith, the declaration of the oneness of God, proceeds a very strong sentiment, possessed by every Moslem, of the unity he forms with all his brothers in the same faith. He violently resents all that seems to affect that doctrine or that would stand in the way of other believers.

Until some time ago, being a Moslem made one a citizen of any Moslem country. The Moslem state was not territorial, but social — a theocentric community, unitarian, universal, founded on a revelation, having a precise vocation and destiny, a prophetic and escatological function. Islam is a religion which is a state.

The reformer Rachid Rida writes, with some nostalgia, "In the past the Turk answered, when asked his nationality, 'I am Moslem, thank God' (to distinguish himself from his Christian enemies, the Greek and Armenian). Today, he answers that he is Turkish." . . . the result of a laicizing political philosophy. Arab nationalism was born thanks to the West, and mostly in reaction against it. Today in any case, that is very clear. Its great strength is anti-colonialism, of which Nasser is the champion. The terms of this nationalism are not fixed nor are the limits of its laicism, which varies a lot from Pakistan to Mauritania, passing through Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, or Guinea. In all these countries Islam is declared the state religion. But the more nationalism gains ground, the more it undermines the very foundations of Islam as a religion.

Which means that the Moslem world today is in a perpetual state of tension, pulled about by rival aspirations: nation or community?

*Adapted from "North African Nationalism"  
by Reverend Father Grillou, W.F.*



The "Barber's Mosque" in Kairouan, Tunisia.

Each Friday at noon, the men must go to the Mosque for the midday prayer. This prayer is generally presided by the Iman, the religious head of the community. The Iman of each Mosque is a layman chosen from among the members of the community. (There is no priesthood in Islam).

*. . past history explains the present . .*

# MOHAMMED

*and the origins of ISLAM*



Ghadaia in the heart of the Sahara,  
holds on to its thousand year old  
traditions . . .

(Photo Blondeau)

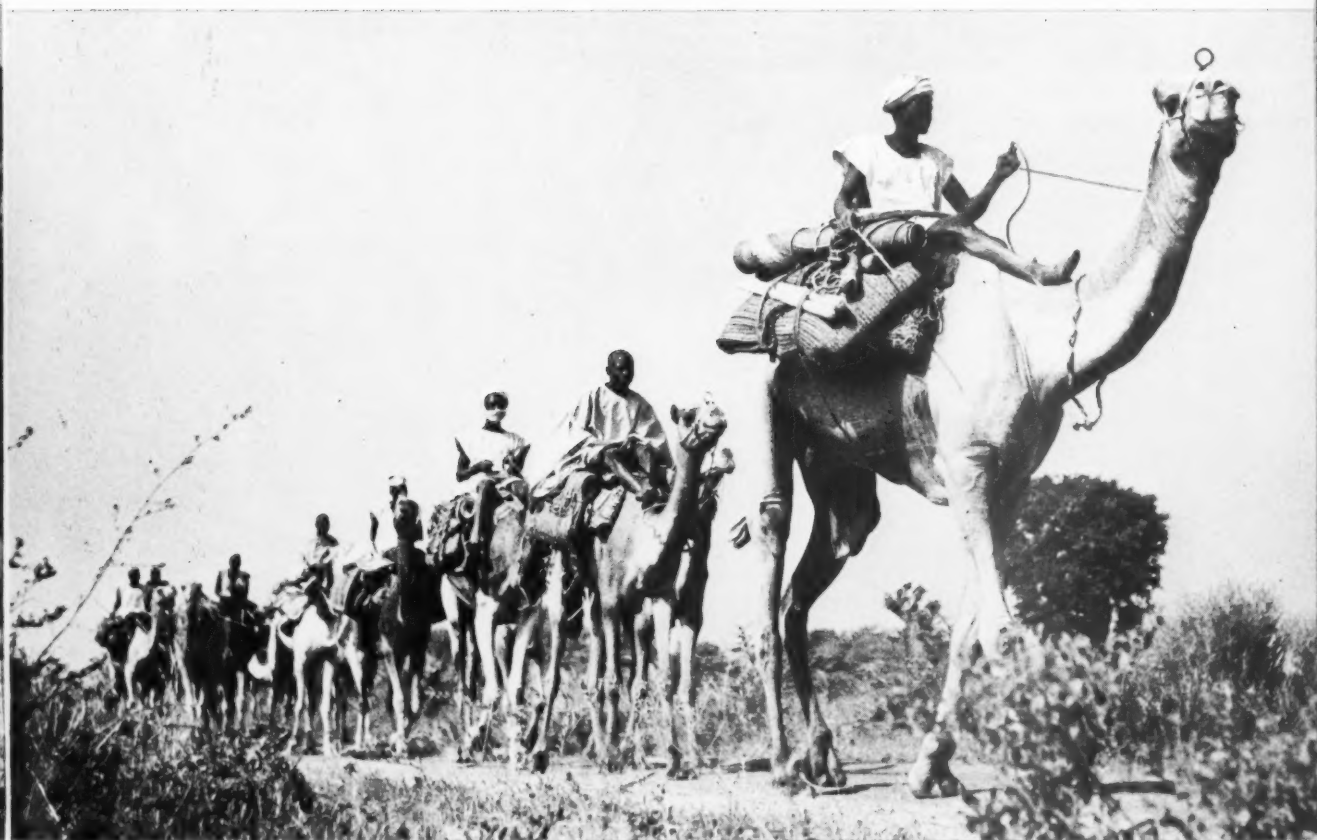


Arab nomads still wander over the  
sandy wastes of the Sahara . . .  
as in Mohammed's day . . .

(Photo Algerian government)

Arabia at the beginning of the eighth century was inhabited by nomads for the most part. A few towns were scattered here and there, among which Mecca stood out as the capital. There Islam came into being, not through the aspirations and needs of a people, but wholly through the work of that extraordinary man who is venerated today by 390 million Moslems as the messenger of God: MOHAMMED.

He had reached the age of 40 without being much talked about. The little we know — and even that is not certain — is that, orphaned at an early age, he was brought up by his uncle, and later on, conducted for years, through the deserts of Arabia and Syria, the caravans of a rich Meccan widow who was later to become his wife.



A CAMEL TRAIN ON ITS WAY TO KANO CITY, NIGERIA . . .  
... BUT ... in Modern Africa and Arabia, the "Old Ship of the Desert" is living the last hours of its legend.

(Photo Information Office, London)

## **MOHAMMED** *and the origins of Islam (continued)*

### CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE

The desert Arabs were pagan, worshipping certain stones as the dwelling places of the divinities, though without much enthusiasm; they had gods but did not pay them much attention . . . they dreamed away their easy-going lives in the shade of each oasis they entered.

Mohammed was different: he was haunted by the problem of the next life. No doubt during his business trips as a young man he had met some Christian monks — mostly schismatic — who had taken refuge in the Arabian desert, or with Jews whose scattered communities had occasional Arab adepts; and while these contacts were too brief and superficial to give him a correct idea of the Christian and Jewish religions, they had awakened in him an awareness of the religious question and sympathy for these faiths which he recognized as superior to the paganism of his own people.

One fact struck him with great force: these foreigners, who led very strict moral lives and despised the polytheism of the pagans, gave their worship to an unique God, Allah, the Master of the World, Who had Himself spoken to the world through prophets. Books in Hebrew and in Greek made known His wishes and announced to the world the day of judgment, when each would render an account of his actions, before being received for all eternity into the joys of Paradise or the flames of Hell.

### A MISSION

These ideas haunted him. He pondered them ceaselessly, meditating on his own nothingness and the divine majesty. A gradual transformation took place in his soul. Of a profoundly religious nature, did Mohammed ever dream of embracing the Christian or Jewish religion? He knew really very little about them as the future was to show. In any case, his fiery passionate temperament would not let him rest: he must teach others this great truth he had learned. Why were the Arabs ignorant of it? Was it not because no one had yet been sent to teach them in their own language? The Jews had had Moses, and the Christians, Jesus. The Arab people alone had no prophet . . .

Mohammed was about 40 years old (610) when he first heard a voice saying "Speak in the name of

God, your Creator . . ." That was the starting point of a religious revolution which was to fill the remaining 20 years of his life. He preached—he convinced first his wife, then a small group of friends, which slowly grew. He discovered in himself an extraordinary speaking ability; what power there was in his language! The phrases fell in strong rhythmical phrases, pleas, imprecations of an apostle against an ignorant, grasping people, enemy of its own real interests. He preached continually the doctrine of the true God, Unique, Creator, Sovereign and Judge.

Soon other doctrines followed. It is probable that Mohammed never read the Bible itself, but he had heard Bible narratives from various sources (some certainly apochryphal) and he repeated them to his willing listeners. It sometimes happened that he erred, making Jesus the contemporary of Moses, or bringing into the Bible narrative Alexander the Great whose legends was still popular among the Byzantines living in the peninsula.

No doubt the Jews who may have heard him, laughed up their sleeves at such errors; but the pagans were impressed by this man, one of their own, speaking their own language in such poetical fashion, preaching with eloquence and force. They accepted as divine revelation, the words spoken with authority by one who claimed to be Allah's envoy, a claim accompanied by blessings for those who believed and imprecations against those who refused . . .

Thus six years passed and the number of disciples at first very small, began to grow. The group was ardent and faithful, and the first opposition did not discourage them. If a few abandoned Mohammed, others simply left Mecca and took refuge in another town, Yethrib, which was of little importance at that time and where they would not be persecuted by the Meccan authorities. The new doctrine continued to spread, and when, on the 16th of July, 622, Mohammed in turn had to leave Mecca, accompanied only by a friend and one slave, he found in Yethrib (since called Medina, the town of the Prophet) a fervent group of followers waiting for him.

From this time on, the new doctrine was to spread rapidly, by preaching and by arms. The group of faithful disciples was henceforth ready for anything and the movement took on new dimensions.



The eighth century??? No! Today! . . . A Glouaa woman from Morocco.

(Photo Moroccan Office)



## **MOHAMMED** *and the origins of Islam (continued)*

Without doubt at this point a notable change took place in Mohammed's conduct: from religious preacher he became seer and prophet . . . At this time, too, the differences between the Christian and Jewish religions and his own preaching may have dawned on him — but he reacted by accusing the followers of Moses and Jesus of having falsified the "Book" and became antagonistic to them, thereby consolidating his own position as leader of the Arab population of Medina. This political success brought about a military encounter with his enemies of Mecca, the famous battle of "Badr" where the victory of Mohammed against vastly superior forces was seen as a miracle to seal the new revelation.

### RELIGIOUS CHIEF

In addition to being the religious head of the community, Mohammed was fast becoming a political leader: he disposed of the spoils and organized the defense. Around him the circle of believers increased: his prestige grew incessantly. The rich merchants of Mecca realized that concessions were necessary. Better do business with this man than oppose his triumph. After a great deal of intrigue, Mecca surrendered and Mohammed returned as a conqueror.

He was no longer the single-minded preacher, but the political chief seeking to strengthen his position. All his preaching was thenceforth tainted with this aim; the "revelations" exalted race, tongue, holy war and demanded blind obedience to his own absolute authority. He proved himself up to the task of organizing his conquests into a state. The revelations

continued, but now they touched on the most diverse circumstances, mixing the private life of the Prophet (which, since the death of his first wife had become rather less than edifying) with the exigencies of current politics.

### ECLIPSE

Islam continued to spread. Caravans and merchants brought the new religion to the borders of Syria and Ethiopia. Everywhere new adherents flowed in and new preachers rose up to propagate their faith.

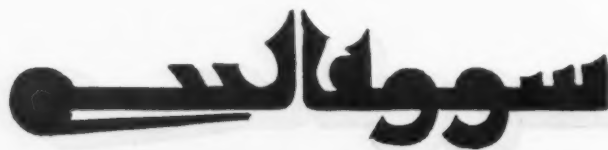
Mohammed was no longer necessary to Islam; his realizations would live on because of the dynamic power which he had infused into it. Already there were some who aspired to take over his authority. He died in his early sixties, and during the first century after his death oblivion surrounded his tomb. Islam, launched on a campaign of conversion by sword and battle, needed a full century before returning to its religious origins and finding the politico-religious equilibrium that marks its history from that time to the present day.

The profound impulse given to Islam by its founder continues to have effect.

Without him, without the Koran he left, and the faith he planted in the hearts of his followers, Islam would not have survived its earlier years nor the difficulties it encountered in the future.

The Islam of today owes all it is to Mohammed.

*J. Gargour, S.J.*



*Chapter on the Pilgrimage.  
Koran.*

# CHRIST IN ISLAM

"... The poor and humble, whether Christian, Moslem or Jew, call on Him, cry out for Him who is their only Hope . . ."

The "OUR FATHER" in Arabic.



اَإِنَّا الَّذِي فِي السَّابِقِ  
لَيْتَنِي اسْتَكْبَرْتُ لِيَاكُوتَكَ اَتِيَتْ شَيْئًا  
كَأَلَيْسَ أَكْذَابُكَ عَلَى هَرَجٍ  
أَعْلَمْتَنِي كَمَا يَوْمَئِذٍ  
وَأَعْلَمْتَنِي نَوْبًا كَمَا نَحْنُ فِي الْخَطَايَا  
وَلَا تَهْجِنَا الْجَبَّارُونَ كَمَا نَحْنُ فِي الشَّيْرِ

امين

٢

JESUS, in the Moslem religion, is not, as many believe, merely the Christ of the Gospel divested of His divinity. Apart from various mentions of Him in the Koran, a whole mass of traditional writings, considered as "inspired," gives Him an important part to play, notably in the chapters relating to the end of the world.

Jesus is claimed as a Moslem, as in fact all the 124,000 prophets from Adam to Mohammed, who is the greatest of them all . . . These prophets were Moslem because of their faith in the one God, Allah. Each prophet was sent to his own people to instruct

them in this truth. At the General Judgment, when Allah commands each man to render an account, Jesus will answer that he has unfailingly proclaimed the message that was confided to him for the sons of Israel: "I have said only that which You commanded me to say: Adore Allah, my Lord and yours." And that is exactly what Noah, Abraham, Moses . . . and Mohammed too . . . have declared, each in his own language — to his own people: nothing other than the Shahada, the Islamic profession of faith, which according to Koranic law, alone assures salvation.

# CHRIST IN ISLAM *(continued)*

However, it is not because of his monotheism alone that Jesus holds such a high position in Islam; it is also because he is considered to have fulfilled the legal obligations which are its "five pillars."

The importance given by Moslem law to ceremonial purification is well known: "it is half the faith." Whether this legal purity be spiritual or corporal, material or mental, Jesus and Mary realized it perfectly. Moslem authors of all times have extolled the integral purity of the "Daughter of Imran," Mary, who was exempt, she and her descendants, from the assaults of Satan the cursed, through the prayer and vow of her mother, Anne. So she was free, not only from all moral corruption, but also from all the physical impurities common to the rest of women.

The Child whose birth the angel announced would also be a pure child. He was born by the operation of the Spirit — even identified with the Spirit of Allah. Brought into existence through the creative "Fiat," he was the "Word of Allah" become a living person, just as the same "Word" would become Sacred Scripture — the Koran — which is eternal and uncreated.

Moslem tradition recounts the incredulity of the people to the teaching of Jesus, and the Koran mentions some of the extraordinary "prodigies" which accompanied his teaching as "evident signs" of his divine mission — but these signs were considered the work of a magician by the Jews and they tried to kill the prophet: however he was not really crucified, for Allah substituted someone else for him, taking him away from the earth. The great majority of Moslem authors deny the Crucifixion, probably in fidelity to the Koranic text which holds that Allah is incapable of failure in the person of his messengers. Their real difficulty concerns the identity of the person who replaced Jesus on the cross—was it Judas? Simon of Cyrene? . . . Several names have been proposed, none with certainty.

"Everyone is bound to die," declares the Koran, so Jesus will come back at the end of time to undergo the inevitable fate. However, he will have a very important mission to accomplish — the completion of his vocation . . . Moslem tradition declares that religion will become more and more debased as time passes and the golden age of its origins fades away.

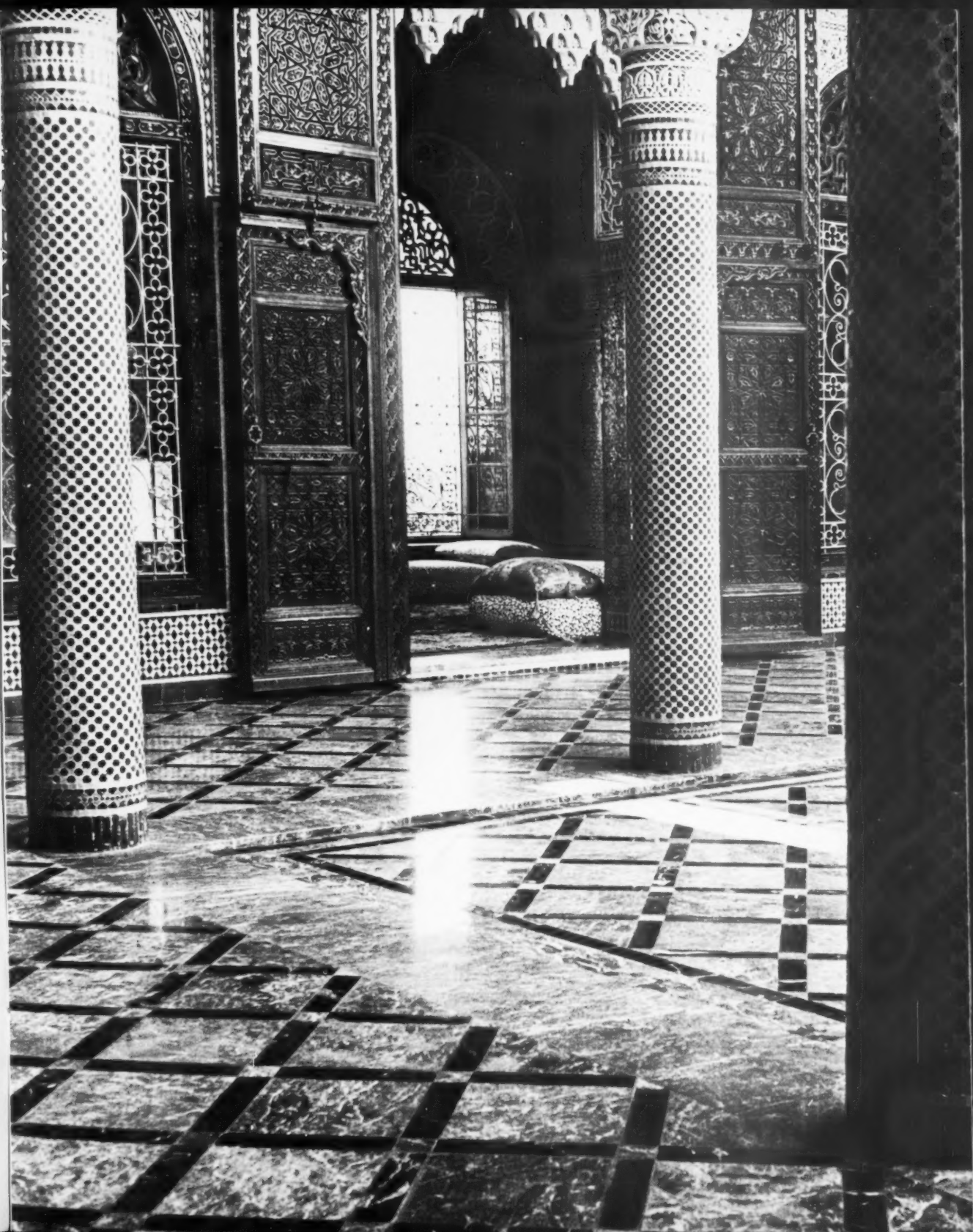
This stage of religious history—the second last—will be sombre: men will give themselves over to song, dancing and music, and will abandon the faith . . . The pages of the Koran, having become useless, since no one will recite them any more, will become blank; the Temple of the Kaaba to which no one will go any more on pilgrimage, will be snatched off the face of the earth. Premonitory signs of the end will appear, such as the invasion of the world by the monsters Gog and Magog. When these cosmic calamities and moral ignominies are at their height, Jesus will come back to reaffirm the principles of the true religion, setting himself up as the champion of monotheism and re-establishing justice degraded by men. He will be a just judge, and will reinstate the Islamic law. All Moslems will be obliged to submit to his decisions as supreme judge. He will die and will be buried at Medina in a space left for him between Mohammed and his first two successors, Abou Bakr, and Umar.

The Moslem religion considers Faith the only necessary virtue. Yet, it would be easy to quote eloquent passages from the great Moslem mystics — Tirmidhi, Ghazali, Hallaj, Makki, Ibn Arabi — in which Our Lord's great message of Love finds a faithful echo. Even reduced to Islamic proportions Jesus never ceases to exercise his fascination on the children of Ismael, elder brother of him who, on Mount Moriah, prefigured the Lamb of God.

Several "Lives" of Jesus have been published in Cairo during the past ten years, bearing witness to the continued presence of the Christ of the Gospel in the very heart of Islam. The philological and historical problems raised by the Koranic text have long been settled by Moslem theologians, but there are many mysteries concerning Jesus which will be solved only at the end of the world, when Jesus returns upon earth . . . The poor and humble, whether Christian, Moslem, or Jew, call on him, claim him, cry out for him who is their only Hope in a world that has lost its faith in God and its love for humanity.

*Adapted from an article by  
MICHEL HAYEK*







A CONVENT—WITH A DIFFERENCE! that of the White Sisters right in the heart of the Kasbah in Algiers: a typically Arab house, where the Sisters live as closely as possible to the people, always ready at their every "beck and call", and sharing with them the suffering and incertitude of the present time.  
(Photo White Sisters)

*"It is by imitating Mary, always accessible, always willing to serve, always loving, that we shall be able to transmit, not only to our African sisters, but through them, the vital message their country awaits."*

MOTHER GERMAINE-MARIE, W. S.

# ISLAM AND US

How ARE WE to testify to the existence of the God of Love in a Moslem country?

By supernatural kindness — the kindness drawn from the heart of Christ, Who manifested His love for men by His unfailing charity.

We know that, of ourselves, we can do nothing. But we must be windows letting through the light of Christ, His life, His action . . .

That is our part: nothing more, nothing less.

In the words of Cardinal Lavigerie, . . . "Nowhere do we find the Apostles exacting, as a preliminary (to conversion), a change in the external habits of a people. They sought to bring about a change of heart, and once that was achieved, they renewed the face of the earth . . .

In order to respect, understand, adapt oneself, it is not enough to love people . . . we must get to know them.  
In their STUDY CENTERS in Tunisia and Algeria, WHITE SISTERS receive a professional, literary and linguistic formation, which must be continued for the rest of their lives . . .

(Photo Blondeau, Algiers)



Mother Germaine Marie, (left) Assistant General of the White Sisters and Sister Jasques, Editor of AFRICA magazine, explore the treasures of Arabic literature.  
(Photo Blondeau, Algiers)

The Basilica of OUR LADY OF AFRICA, in Algiers, towards which arise the prayers of Christians and the supplications of many Moslems, ever appealing to Mary . . . the Mother of Jesus and the Mother of all men.

(Photo Jomane, Algiers)



## .. and I called her MARIAM ..

THUS THE KORAN reveals the name given to Mary by her mother. It must be admitted that the majority of Christians have little or no idea of the important place that Mary holds in Islam.

The Koran—the Moslems' sacred book—and the religion based on it, instill into the spiritual life of many of their believers a very special devotion to Mary. They sketch with much respect, the principal lines in Mary's life, revealing more or less explicitly, that they do not place her on the same level as other women, whether Khadidja, Mohammed's first wife, Aycha, his youngest wife, or Fatima, his best loved daughter.

According to Moslems, the Virgin Mary was conceived in her parents' old age, and was endowed with the great privilege of being born immaculate.

Her mother, deeply grieved at not having had any children after long years of marriage, entreated God to give her a child, promising to consecrate it to Him. God heard her prayer. Hoping for a boy, she offered him to Allah saying, "Lord, I offer and consecrate to you the child in my womb. Accept him from me." "And when her child was born," adds the Koran, "she said, 'Lord I have brought a child into the world, a daughter . . . and I place her and her descendant under your protection against Satan . . .'"

"Every new-born child," said the Prophet (not excepting himself) "is touched by Satan, except two; Mary and her son." And each time that this privilege has been attacked, either in its existence or its meaning, the representatives of Moslem Orthodoxy have defended it most energetically.



# American Pro Province Formed



In 1929 the White Sisters opened their first house in the United States. Since then the development of their work and the establishment of four other houses have made possible the organization of the first American Pro Province with Mother Elizabeth Anne at its head.

Mother Elizabeth Anne, originally from Hamburg, New York spent four years teaching in Uganda, East Africa before her appointment as Superior of the U.S. Postulate in Franklin, Pa., in 1957.

The organization of a Pro Province should coordinate even more closely the activities of the White Sisters in America, making it possible for them to work more efficaciously than ever for the spiritual and temporal good of Africa.

## SISTERS (SISTERS) MEET IN AFRICA

*Mother Clair Anne (right) and Sister Columban (Marguerite and Constance Gemme from Worcester, Mass.) recently spent several happy months together at St. Charles Monastery, Algiers . . . Sr. Columban—who is now engaged in medical work in Ghana—was receiving the final touch in her missionary formation before setting out for the missions: her "big sister" was following a sort of "spiritual refresher course", given to Sisters after a number of years of mission experience.*



(Photo Blondeau—Algiers)



Photo by Shields, Washington, D.C.

*His Excellency the Most Reverend Fulton J. Sheen and Mother Mary of Walsingham, photographed at the National Shrine, where the 1960 Mission Secretariat Meeting officially began with the celebration of Holy Mass.*

# a new spirit for a new age

ON SEPTEMBER 18, more than eight hundred representatives of the Mission-sending Societies of the United States will meet in Washington under the sponsorship of the Mission Secretariat. It will be the Twelfth Annual Meeting of these Societies and will, perhaps, be the most important missionary convocation ever held in this country. Its great importance stems from the fact that all discussions will revolve around a general theme which is "A New Spirit for a New Age."

It is a "new age" in the secular world and in the religious world. For one thing, the age of colonialism has passed. One need only to reflect on the fact that there are so many newly emergent, independent nations in Asia and Africa to realize that. In the field of communications, we have achieved more, technologically speaking, in the past forty years than in all previous periods of history. And during this same forty year span, we have witnessed the tyrannization of one-third of the world's populations by the protagonists of the Marxist ideology. At no time in world history has there been such an international effort to improve the social and economic lot of the hungry and sick of the world. For the first time in history, scientific research has put into the hands of men the power to destroy all human life in a very brief period. It is a world, then, of great scientific advance and a world which lives with fear.

In the religious world, the Church's growth viewed from a percentage angle, is not keeping pace with the population growth. It is true that the Church is universal in extent. It is visibly present in almost every nation. Catholic missionaries are to be found everywhere and, since 1926, the wonderful development of autochthonous Bishops, clergy, and Religious is most encouraging. Here in the United States, the increasing interest in missionary work gives us cause to believe that our American Catholics are beginning to understand that the evangelization of the world, the Christianization of World Society, is a task incumbent upon each individual.

In 1944, Father John Considine of Maryknoll wrote: "... Times without number we recite the Creed and speak of the Communion of Saints — the union through which all men of Asia, Africa, Europe, the Americas, and all the blessed who have passed into eternity would be bound by God in a single whole with Christ as their Head. But as yet the faithful on earth are but a small fraction of all men, and of those who have died only a small fraction

had previously been brought to Christ. Can we continue with equanimity to talk of this Communion of Saints which binds together so few of those whom God intended it should unite?

Christian life is not the exercise of routines, the observance of taboos. It consists of the sanctification of our souls by the worship of God and the service of our fellow men. It goes without saying that the ordinary Catholic can serve actively only those immediately about him; but World Christianity seeks to point out that Christian society, using all the means it can muster, must devote itself to the service of world society. God did not bestow His precious gifts for the use of a minority. Through the world-wide mission organization of the Church, through charitable, social, educational, economic and political movements, private and governmental, Christian people everywhere must labor to the end that all men may possess the spiritual blessings and the temporal requisites for a fit life on earth and for the attainment of eternal happiness in heaven. World Christianity reminds us that such a goal is not of supererogation: It is our simple duty by Christian teaching . . ." (*Education to World Christianity*. Mission Education Committee, National Catholic Educational Association.).

The late Pope Pius XII and our present Holy Father, Pope John XXIII, have again and again stressed the obligations of Christians to participate actively in all those international movements which have as their aim the true benefit of mankind even though those movements are not specifically Christian in organization. After all, the hero of the great short story on practical charity was the pagan Samaritan, despised of the Jews.

A "New Spirit" must infuse all our people. A spirit of love for all mankind. We are not striking out to new frontiers for love knows no frontiers. It must encircle the globe. All men are brothers and God is our common Father.

As Father Donald O'Mahony, S. S. C., put it recently in an interview with the NC NEWS SERVICE, "We're on the brink of a new age in which the Church will speak of its missions, more of its mission — without the final 's'. That mission, of course, is to Christianize all peoples. The revolution consists now of the re-thinking and regrouping that are already under way with the aim of giving all Catholics a part in the job."

By: Brother Hilary, M.S.S.T.  
(MISSION SECRETARIAT Publicity Committee)

# ISLAM

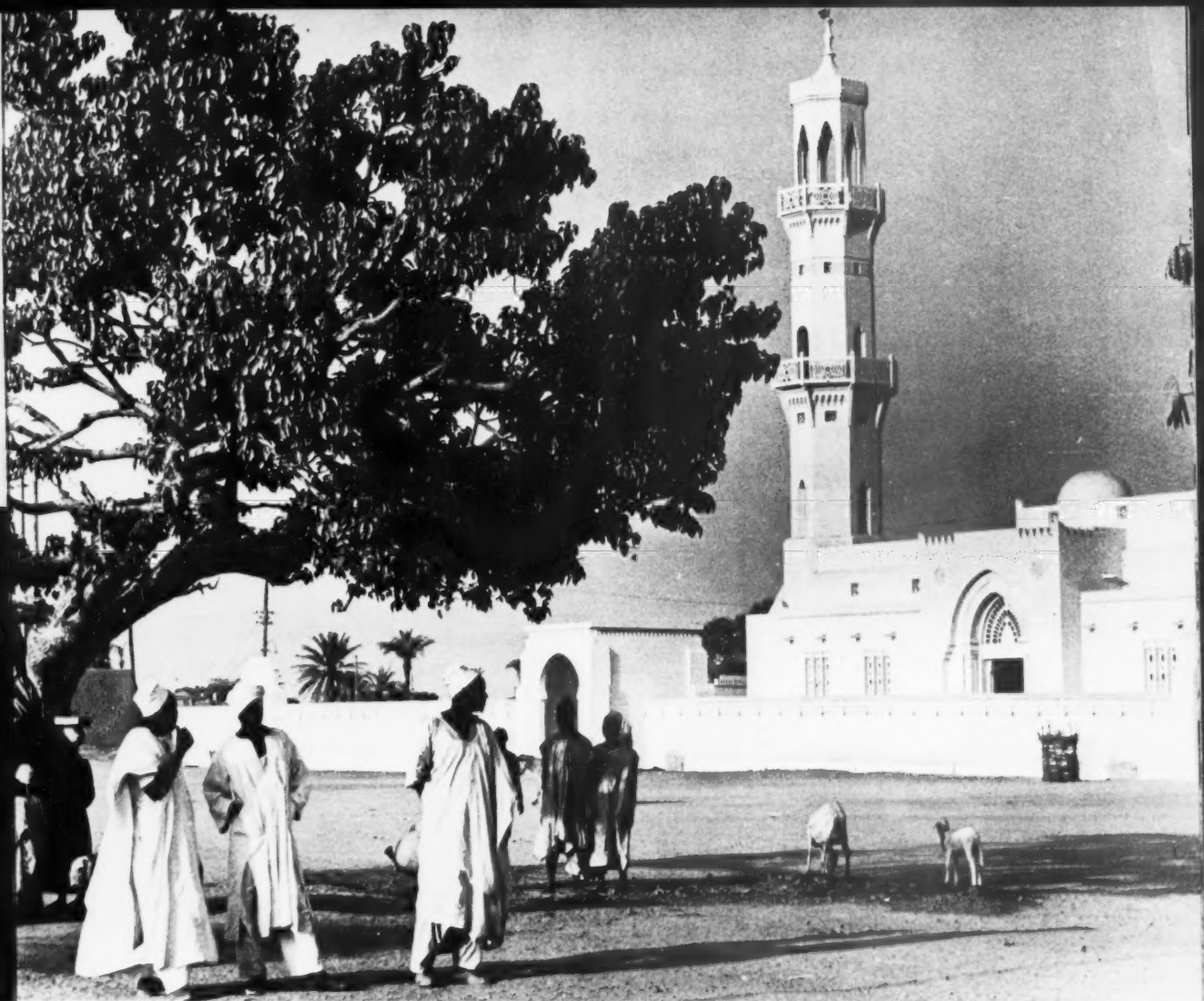
## SOUTH OF THE SAHARA



IN 1931 there were 44 million Moslems in Africa; there are now about 84 million . . . Numbers speak for themselves. Such results are due to the personal initiative of the Moslems themselves; but during these last years, other plans of attack have been set in motion: In 1954 Egypt, Pakistan and Arabia joined forces in order to cover the whole of Africa. So as not to arouse the suspicion of the Europeans, the movement was presented under form of anti-communism. That is what Colonel Nasser said at that time; but he also explicitly showed a definite

spirit of religious proselytism: "Islam must be carried to all corners of the African continent," he said, "for it is regrettable to leave throngs of Africans deprived of the true religion and to let Christian missionaries add to the ground that they have already gained." Nothing could be clearer — Islam has enlivened its missionary spirit.

Since then, leading Moslems by common accord, have decided that Egypt would plan an Islamic invasion supported by Arabia, while numerous communities of Indians would serve for the "take-off."



KANO in Nigeria, West Africa. "The city where three worlds meet . . ."

(Photo Information Office, London)

### **Reasons For The Success Of Mohammedanism In Africa**

*The main reasons for Islam's success among primitive peoples are: the simplicity of its doctrine, its superiority over fetichism, and its easy morals which allow for polygamy. Indian and Arabic traders have been among Islam's most zealous propagandists, especially in East Africa.*

*But Africa is evolving rapidly.*

*With the intellectual and economic development of to-day, the young generation demands more than the one that preceded it. It must have a religion that is better adapted and more developed and this is where exterior influence comes in.*



Arab woman from Chad.

(Photo A. O.)



## ISLAM SOUTH OF THE SAHARA

(continued)

### PROPAGANDA CENTRES

#### a) Cairo.

The influence of the Islamic university of El Azhar in Cairo, continues spreading by reason of the increasing number of African students who attend it. In 1952 it counted 305 students who were joined two years later by 400 coming from all parts of Africa. They have no fees to pay and receive five Egyptian pounds a month.

On returning to their respective countries many of them become fervent propagandists of Egyptian Mohammedanism. Thus a reform is being prepared which will be systematically directed towards converting African pagans.

#### b) Mecca. (Arabia)

The increase in the number of pilgrims going to Mecca, reinforces that sense of oneness existing among Moslems. In many places the slogan is spread abroad that Islam is the religion of the Africans, and that, once the Whites have left the country, the Moslems will be the rulers.

At Dar-es-Salaam in Tanganyika, a Moslem General Committee was set up to coordinate Islamic propaganda forces.

#### c) Pakistan.

An example of Islam's missionary possibilities is given by the disciples of the Aga Khan, particularly in East Africa. In 1945 the "East African Moslem Welfare Society," sort of benevolent society for the furthering of social, religious, educational and cultural progress, was founded in Mombasa.

The Moslems contribute a yearly sum to which the Aga Khan promised, in 1945, to add the same amount. In ten years an enormous sum was collected, which permitted the construction of numerous Mosques and schools, and provided scholarships to Makerere University College in Uganda. In this one country alone 30 Mosques, 48 primary schools, and a boarding school, were built thanks to the help of this social "pool."

Propaganda is furthered by the "Aga Khan Jubilee Trust," which loans capital at a very low interest to Moslems who wish to set up a little business in East Africa. To begin with the beneficiary simply administers the goods that the Trust lends him. After a certain time, he becomes a partner, then proprietor, of the enterprise, and in turn helps Africans who desire to set themselves up in business, on condition that they become Moslems.

In addition, Indians settling in East Africa are encouraged to practice polygamy, marrying African women who, with their children, increase the Moslem population.

### A CONQUERING PROSELYTISM

In central Africa there is a veritable race between Christians and Mohammedans to convert the pagan population. The old pagan society is breaking up





## ISLAM SOUTH OF THE SAHARA

quickly as it comes into contact with the modern way of life, and paganism seems bound to disappear from Africa within the next 50 years . . . A startling prospect, which should spur us on to action, for the Africans must choose between Mohammedanism and Christianity (unless they become atheists).

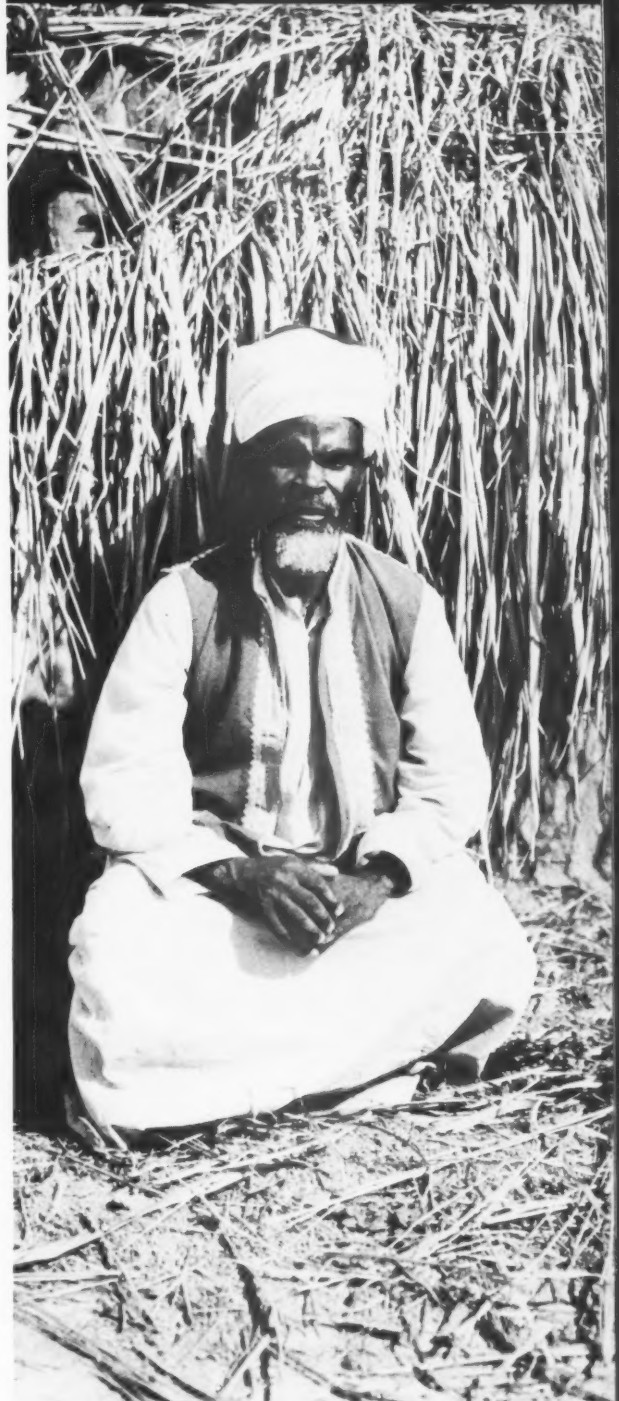
If the Africans converted to Islam are not always fervent, they are nonetheless lost to Christianity, humanly speaking. On joining Islam they find a faith, an organized society, exterior rites and prayers — all factors of security and satisfaction for Africans desiring progress. In addition, once admitted into the Moslem world, it is extremely difficult to break away.

It was a Moslem who wrote: "The Moslem community is not supra-national, it is the only nation possessing the right to exist on earth . . ." Christianity, while working to better human conditions exercises its power over souls, Islam claims the right over the whole person and human society itself; Islam is working to establish a kingdom here on earth . . .

### MOSLEMS AND COMMUNISM

The Moslem society declares itself absolutely anti-communist, anti-materialist, anti-atheist, and in theory, at least, guards against accepting Marxist principles. But the fact remains that communist countries have a strong attraction for Islam. What the modern Moslem society admires in Russia, is the fact that a country which was economically retarded should be able to rise of itself to the same level as leading Western countries, and inspire in its subjects, not only respect but fear as well.

One might say that the Moslem society camps on the borders of communism. While refusing its doctrine, it would willingly adopt communist methods, which apparently would permit it also to become equal to the West.



شورمالا سوت

# ISLAM

## FRIEND FOR A NIGHT

*"Those who have partaken of the same salt and the same bread,  
are no longer strangers, but even closer than good friends."  
(Arab proverb)*

(Photo Algerian government)





*The following incident occurred some years ago in Tunisia, during an unsettled period.*

THE COMMANDING OFFICER of a royal detachment found himself separated from his men and dangerously close to the enemy camp. At nightfall, exhausted from futile efforts to find his way back to his own lines and suffering from thirst, he rode up to an isolated encampment and asked for hospitality.

The Arab invited his enemy in without hesitation and welcomed him with all the courtesy and respect for which desert-dwellers are so renowned. Among them, as it was during classical times, the head of the family deems it his privilege to serve strangers. When a stranger of some rank is received, the host immediately has the best lamb of his flock killed, and his servants prepare it as well as possible. In certain Arab tribes, the ancient custom of washing the guests' feet is still maintained, and it is likewise the father of the family who undertakes the task.

The host and his guest partook of the meal together, and, although from opposing camps they talked with great frankness and friendliness of their great deeds and of their ancestors, until all at once the Arab became deathly pale . . . He rose hastily from his seat and left the tent; a few moments later he sent word to his guest that he was not feeling well and could not be present at the rest of the meal. However, the messenger added, a bed had been prepared for the stranger; in addition, since his horse was not fit for a long and arduous journey, a fresh horse would be waiting for him the next morning. The stranger, at a loss to explain the strange conduct of his host, withdrew to the tent which had been assigned to him.

Before dawn he was awakened by a servant and

given something to eat, but he saw none of the family until he discovered, before his tent, the Arab chief holding the bridle of the horse which had been promised him: another attention which is a mark of great courtesy and respect.

However, no sooner was the officer mounted than the Arab said: "Yesterday evening, while you were telling of your exploits, I discovered you to be the murderer of my father. I have often sworn before all the members of my family to avenge his death, and to that end I have vowed to pursue his murderer from sunrise to sunset. The sun has not yet risen; leave our tent in safety, since, fortunately for you, our religion forbids me to attack a guest under my protection. But all my obligations cease from the moment we separate, and at sunrise I will be at your heels: from that moment consider me as your sworn enemy, who will take your life in whatever place and at whatever time we may meet in the future. The horse you are going to ride is in no way inferior to the one that is waiting for me; on his speed depends the life of one or the other of us—or of both—" and shaking the hand of his adversary, he left him.

The Tunisian, taking advantage of the short start he had before sunrise, managed to arrive at the Bey's camp without having been caught by the Arab who followed him as near the camp as safety would permit.

That is without doubt an extraordinary example of hospitality. But there is no Arab who would not behave likewise, were he in the same circumstances.

*(Adapted from a narrative by J. MacCarthy)*



THE TUNISIAN COASTLINE.

"My love guides and urges me on towards the fatherland where there is no night."

(Raymond Lulle)

*Greater Love Than This, No Man Hath . . . . .*

## RAYMOND LULLE

HE LIVED in the thirteenth century: more than 650 years have passed since his death.

At a moment when so many Christians, under the pressure of events, are seeking to establish relations with the followers of Mohammed and to bridge an abyss that seems to deepen each day, the example of this pioneer is worth our meditation. And if an intercessor is needed in Heaven to plead this cause, who could be a better choice than a man whose entire life had no other purpose.

A mysterious and thrilling existence was that of Raymond Lulle, the "Enlightened Doctor." An aura surrounded him: it was said that he had searched for the philosopher's stone and knew the secrets of alchemy; he was known to have travelled all over the world, and to have been received by the great ones of the earth—Popes, kings and princes; after a brilliant and rather dissolute youth, it was said that God in a dramatic encounter had called him to His service.

Whatever be the facts, one thing was sure: con-

verted all at once, like Saint Paul on the road to Damascus, he became a Franciscan tertiary, and thenceforth unreservedly devoted his talents to writing and working for the glory of God, and to bringing all men to His love.

There was work at hand, in his own homeland. Born at Palma, in Majorca, he had early become aware of the problem of Islam throughout the Spanish peninsula: the Reconquista had just been completed. It seemed to him (and in several ecstasies God confirmed him in his view) that he was meant to work with the groups of recently converted but badly instructed former Moslems living in Spain, and the proximity of Moslem kingdoms on the other side of the Mediterranean was an added challenge. He had met many Moslems, he had learned Arabic perfectly and even written books in that language. En-

couraged by his spiritual director, Saint Raymond of Pennafort, he threw himself into the work with all his heart.

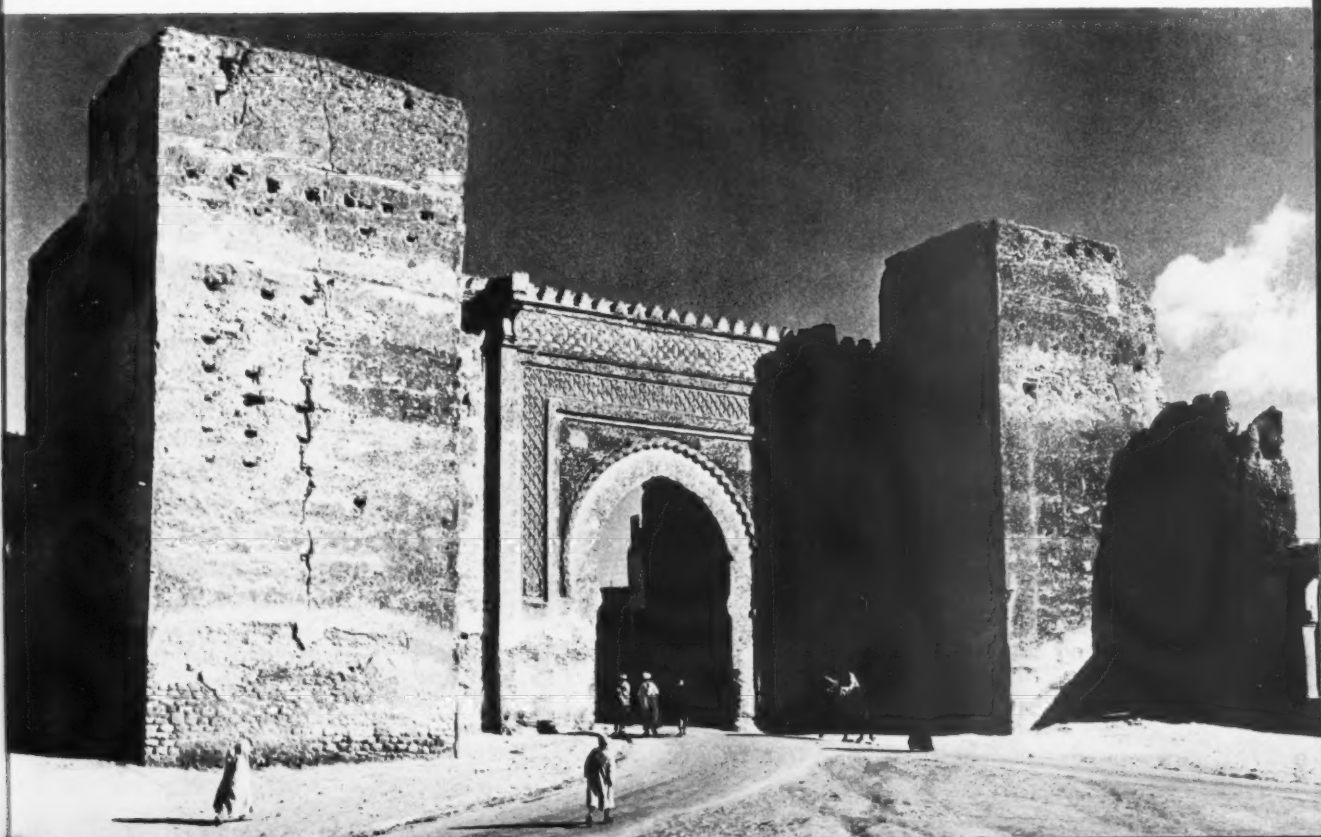
For years he worked untiringly for the establishment of his program, obtaining from King James of Catalonia the permission to found a college where Friars Minor would prepare themselves for their special apostolate, interesting successive Popes — Nicholas II, Celestine V, Boniface VIII — in his projects, persuading several of the great Universities — Oxford, Bologna, Salamanca and the Sorbonne — to establish professorships in Arabic and other oriental languages.

When he considered the first part of his program well enough prepared, he went on to the last and most important point: direct action.

MEKNES (Morocco): Bab Berbaine, one of the monumental city gates, ornamented with green ceramics, was built at the end of the 17th century.

Raymond Lulle here preached to men the great Love of God.

(Photo Tourist Office, Morocco)



## RAYMOND LULLE (continued)

Then began a chain of extraordinary adventures. Landing at Tunis, dressed like the Moslem sages, he mingled with the crowds and addressed them in perfect Arabic, discussed religion with learned Moslems. In short order he was arrested, cruelly whipped and banished—but the boat had barely got under way before he slipped overboard and swam back to the Tunisian coast, ready to take up his task again with an amazing contempt for danger.

Four times he turned to African soil, continually risking prison or death. Once, imprisoned for six months, he spent the time writing a book on the Moslem religion, showing how it differs from the Catholic religion and how Christian apostles might approach it.

In the end, his tenacity triumphed. King James of Catalonia took advantage of his cordial business relations with the Bey of Tunis to make him accept Raymond Lulle with the title of "the Infidels' Procurator." This official standing protected him until one June morning in 1316 when a crowd of Moslems who had been listening to his arguments rushed up on him, beat him unmercifully and left him for dead.

Some Christian sailors took him aboard a boat bound for his native Majorca, but within sight of land he died, his only regret being that the Lord had not given him the grace of dying a martyr on African soil.

He left to those who come after him these words, as a final testimony: "I see worldly knights go overseas to the Holy Land, imagining that they will take it by force, and in the end they all wear themselves out without having reached the goal. And it seems to me, Lord, that this conquest can only be achieved as You achieved it with Your Apostles, that is, by love, prayer, and the shedding of tears. In like fashion, let religious knights start out, let them preach the truth of the Passion, and do for love of You what You have done for love of them."

*From Daniel-Rops  
of the French Academy*



PALMA, MAJORCA. Homeland of RAYMOND LULLE.

(Photo Blondeau, Algiers)

africa

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(Photo Blondeau, Algiers)

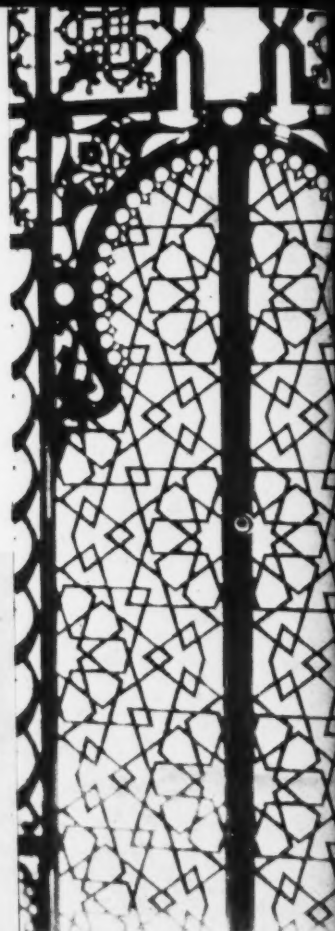
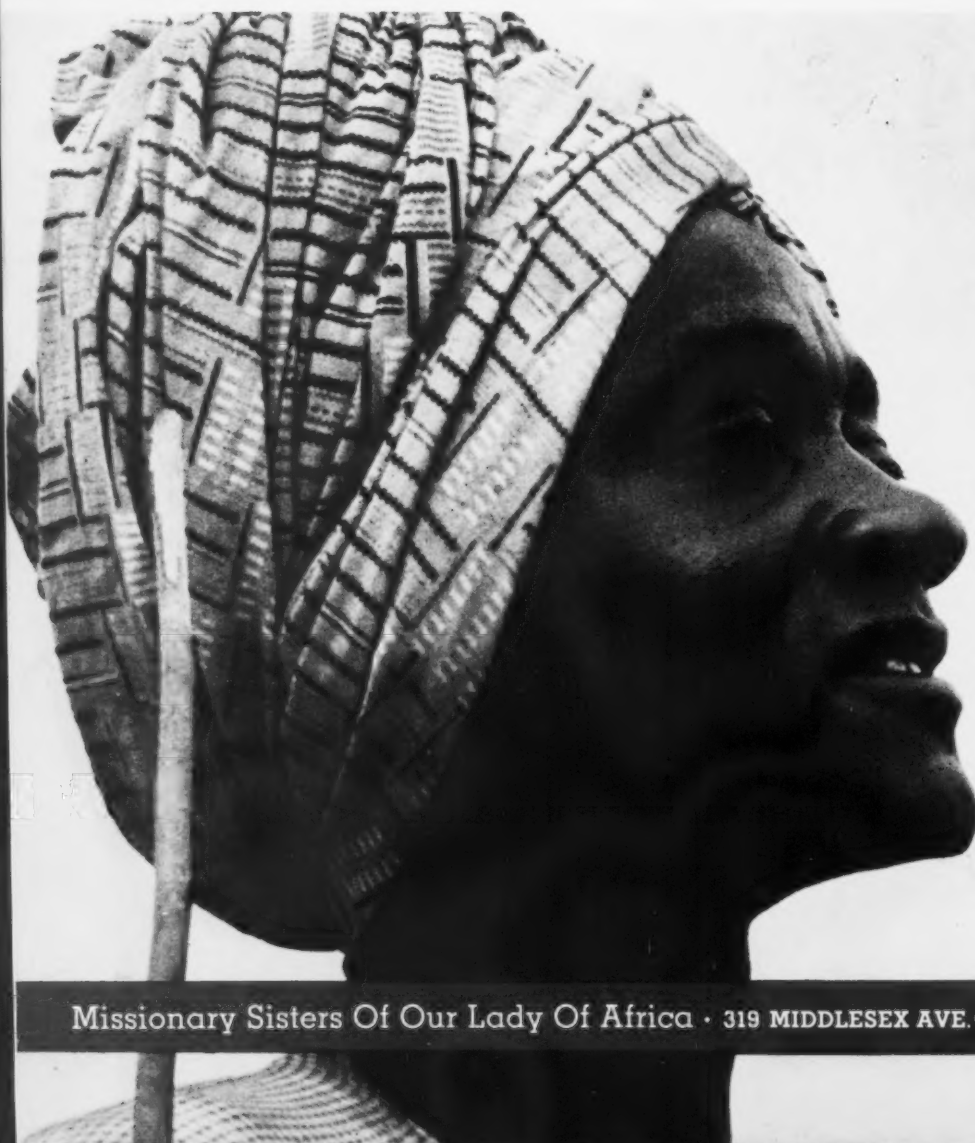
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